

Message from the Chair



I want to take this opportunity to update you on some faculty news that received significant attention over the past few months. In February, research by Dr. Robert Samstein and international colleagues that focused on the role of immunogenetics in lung cancer risk was published in *Science*.

At the 2024 ASCO Annual Meeting, Dr. Karyn Goodman served as a discussant for a plenary session on the ESOPEC Trial comparing perioperative chemotherapy to neoadjuvant chemoradiation in patients with esophageal cancer. Dr. Goodman also spoke about colon cancer screening and prevention in an interview with *Newsweek*.

We were delighted to welcome our latest class of Radiation Oncology physician residents. Additionally, our seventh class for radiation therapy students and our third class of medical dosimetry students at the Mount Sinai Center for Radiation

Sciences Education recently started. It is extraordinary how this program has grown and achieved national notability in such a short time. A special thank you to Dr. Vishruta Dumane, Victoria Olsen, and Danielle McDonagh for shepherding our Class of 2024 radiation therapy and dosimetry students who graduated in June.

The fall always brings our major conferences in radiation oncology. This year, our department was well represented at the ASTRO national meeting with several faculty and residents having prominent roles in the educational, research, and plenary sessions.

Best wishes to all for Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

Kenneth Rosenzweig, MD
Professor and Chair
Department of Radiation Oncology

Physician and Artist: Following Parallel Paths



Richard G. Stock, MD, is a specialist in radiosurgery for urologic cancers in the Department of Radiation Oncology. While pursuing a distinguished medical and scientific career, Dr. Stock has had a parallel commitment to his talent as an artist. The son of a painter and art teacher, he always had a passion for art and in the late 1990s, he

attended the Art Students League while continuing to paint sporadically. Following the tragic loss of his son in 2014, Dr. Stock began creating art as a way of living through his grief. During a visit to an exhibit, *Reflections on Grief and Child Loss*, on display at President Lincoln's Cottage, he noticed an intriguing old tree that had been planted by Lincoln near their summer home. The beauty of the shapes, forms, and color of this

tree prompted Dr. Stock to paint and capture the intrinsic beauty found in the natural world. Below are two of Dr. Stock's paintings from his 2024 collection, which can be viewed at www.richardstockart.com/2024.



Lichen Sunset - Oil on Linen



Twin Trees - Oil on Linen

External Honors

Dr. Kenneth Rosenzweig Named to ABR Board of Trustees

Kenneth Rosenzweig, MD, has been named to the Board of Trustees of the American Board of Radiology (ABR) effective September 2024. Dr. Rosenzweig has been an ABR volunteer since 2002, serving in multiple roles, including as question writer and oral examiner. In 2015, he received the ABR Lifetime Service Award. Most recently, Dr. Rosenzweig served as Chair of the Lung/Sarcoma Section of the Qualifying Exam.

The ABR Board of Trustees advances the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of exams for initial and continuing certification across radiology, radiation oncology, and medical physics. The trustees provide recommendations to the ABR's Board of Governors on assessment structure, such as exam format, content, assembly, delivery, scoring, and feedback.

Awards of Distinction

Special Honors for Dr. Maria Dimopoulos



Congratulations to **Maria Dimopoulos, PhD, MBA, RT(T)**, Associate Director, Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai Center for Radiation Sciences Education, Medical Dosimetry, and Radiation Therapy Programs, who has recently been honored with two prestigious awards.

The American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) Foundation named Dr. Dimopoulos as a recipient of its International Speakers Exchange Award (ISEA). With this award, the ASRT Foundation provides outstanding radiologic technologists with the opportunity to travel to one international conference each year and present to an audience of their peers and other related healthcare professionals. In June 2024, Dr. Dimopoulos presented "Identifying Radiation Therapists' Perceptions of Potentially

Triggering Aspects of Care for Sexual Violence Survivors Undergoing Radiotherapy" at the United Kingdom Imaging and Oncology Congress held in Liverpool, England.

In addition, the ASRT Foundation awarded its \$50,000 International Collaborative Research Grant to Dr. Dimopoulos, as principal investigator, along with her co-investigators, **Samantha Skubish, MS, RT(R)(T)**, Chief Technical Director, Department of Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai Health System, and Canadian colleagues. The grant will support their research involving analysis of previous and current advanced practice radiation therapist training programs internationally and to identify an evidence-based, best-practice framework for APRT education in the U.S. and Canada.

In the News

Dr. Karyn Goodman Featured in *Newsweek*



A specialist in gastrointestinal cancers, **Karyn Goodman, MD, MS**, Vice Chair for Research and Quality in the Department of Radiation Oncology, shared her expertise in a July 2024 interview with *Newsweek*. Dr. Goodman spoke about screening for colon cancer, stressing that in light of the

increase in the number of cases among younger adults,

the recommendation for screening age has been reduced from 50 to 45 years old. She also discussed that family history is important in determining when screenings should begin and warning signs that could indicate the need to see a doctor.

For the full article and video with Dr. Goodman, visit <https://www.newsweek.com/family-history-key-when-screening-colon-cancer-oncologist-says-1923491>

In the News (continued)

Samantha Skubish, MS, RT(R)(T) Authors Cover Article for *ASRT Scanner*

Samantha Skubish, MS, RT(R)(T), Chief Technical Director, Department of Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai Health System, serves as the Radiation Therapy Subcommittee Chair for the ASRT Practice Standards Council. The April/May 2024 edition of *ASRT Scanner* features the cover story authored by Ms. Skubish, “Therapy Refined: Shaping Practice Standards for Modern Advancements.”

The article highlights the efforts of the Practice Standards Council and the Radiation Therapy Subcommittee in advancing quality in both clinical practice and education to keep pace with the latest technologies and regulatory requirements.



Spotlight on Staff

Outstanding Achievements

Marking a Professional Milestone



Congratulations to **Yun Jeong Seo, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, AOCN**, an advanced practice nurse with the Department of Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai West, for earning her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from Hunter College’s Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing. In pursuit of her DNP, Dr. Seo completed her research project – Implementation of an Evidence-Based High-Risk Patient Management HEART (High ED/Admission Risk Therapy) Team Protocol for Adult Oncology Patients

Receiving Multimodal Cancer Therapy. This project demonstrated the significance of multidisciplinary collaboration and enhanced nurse-driven symptom management protocols to reduce unnecessary Emergency Department visits. Dr. Seo employed a patient-centered care approach combined with a nursing assessment algorithm and checklist. Following implementation of the HEART team protocol, Emergency Department visits by adult oncology patients decreased by 14 percent.

Excellence in Action

A Show of Support



Ana Cleverly, medical office assistant, Department of Radiation Oncology, Mount Sinai West, was presented with the Support Staff Excellence Award during Mount Sinai’s Nurses Month celebration. Ms. Cleverly’s hard work and dedication were recognized by her colleagues in Radiation Oncology and the Department

of Nursing, and our department is grateful to have Ms. Cleverly as a valuable member of the team. Thank you, Ana, for all that you do and the meaningful difference you make. You are most deserving of this award!

Following are just some words of praise and admiration from her friends and co-workers.

“Ana is an integral part of our team who ensures that the nursing staff is able to complete their role efficiently and assists with throughput of the patients. Everything she does, she does so with a smile on her face. When asked a question Ana will know the answer or provide information on how to find the answer to your question.”

“Ana is always willing to help and readily offers support to every staff member and patient. She is thoughtful and compassionate regarding our patients’ needs and provides our patients with the sense of comfort and compassion during her interactions with them.”

“Ana comes to work with a bright affect and positive attitude that cannot be diminished. She presents herself for work every day to do what is needed with a bright smile on her face.”

Education Highlights

Meet Our 2024 Radiation Oncology Residents



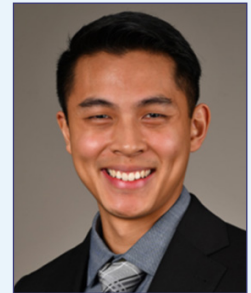
Danielle Arons, MD
University of Maryland School
of Medicine



Lauren Jacobs, MD
George Washington University
School of Medicine and
Health Sciences



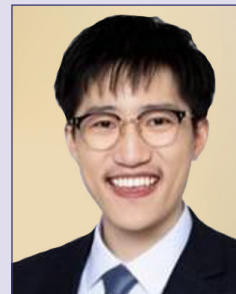
Nicholas Murphy, MD
Wayne State University
School of Medicine



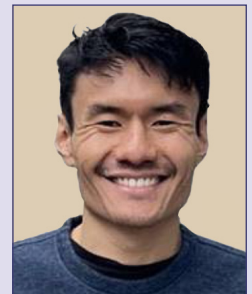
Benjamin Tran, MD
McGovern Medical School
at UTHealth Houston

Welcome to Our New Clinical Medical Physics Residents

The Clinical Medical Physics Residency program, a three-year research and clinical training program at Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine, welcomes new medical physicist residents, Hao Guo, PhD, from Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, and Tenzin Kunyab, PhD, from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver.



Hao Guo, PhD



Tenzin Kunyab, PhD

Center for Radiation Sciences Education Introduces Class of 2025

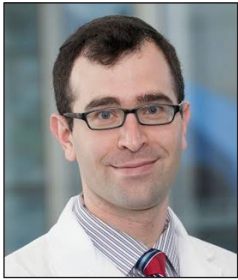
The Department of Radiation Oncology welcomes its seventh radiation therapy cohort and third medical dosimetry cohort at the Center for Radiation Sciences Education. The students started their clinical year at Mount Sinai in June 2024.

(Front row, from left) Isaias Montoya, Hao Jun Chen, Jennifer Chen, Lauren Monarque, and Emily Chen; (back row, from left) Tyler Chiu, Andrew Lin, Dennis Campos, Samantha Ciumei, Kelley Swierupski, Natalia Nowakowski, and Andrea Diaz. Radiation therapy students are in blue scrubs and medical dosimetry students are in business attire.



Published Research

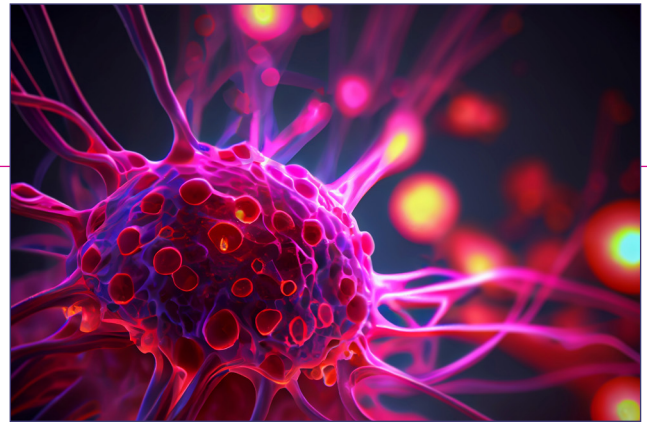
Can Immunogenetics Predict Lung Cancer Risk?



As a physician scientist in the Precision Immunology Institute at Mount Sinai, **Robert Samstein, MD, PhD**, has a research interest in understanding the interaction between the immune system and cancer cells with the goal of identifying new strategies to harness the immune anti-

tumor response and expand the therapeutic window of traditional immunotherapies. Most recently, Dr. Samstein was a co-author on an international, multicenter study on an immunogenetic basis for lung cancer risk published in the February 23, 2024, issue of *Science*.

Can the host immune system naturally protect against cancer? This question has long been the subject of intense debate and formed the basis of the study by Dr. Samstein and his research colleagues to better understand the molecular determinants of lung cancer risk. Drawing on genetic and longitudinal clinical data from the UK Biobank and FinnGen, a research project in genomics and personalized medicine, the team performed multimodal genomic analyses of nonmalignant and lung tumor samples to evaluate the effect of *HLA* heterozygosity on lung cancer risk.



As a result, they found that genetic variation in immunosurveillance is a critical risk factor for lung cancer. In particular, they showed that an association of *HLA-II* heterozygosity with reduced risk of lung cancer suggests that genetic variation in immunosurveillance is a feature of cancer susceptibility, along with environmental exposures, hereditary risk, and DNA replication errors. Their findings pave the way for the potential of incorporating immunogenetics into lung cancer screening programs.

Learn More

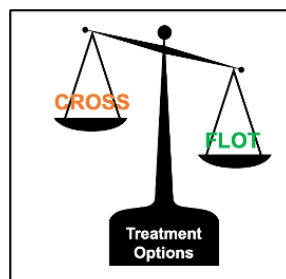
Krishna C, Tervi A, Saffern M, Wilson EA, Yoo SK, Mars N, Roudko V, Cho BA, Jones SE, Vaninov N, Selvan ME, Gümüş ZH; FinnGen§; Lenz TL, Merad M, Boffetta P, Martínez-Jiménez F, Ollila HM, Samstein RM, Chowell D. An immunogenetic basis for lung cancer risk. *Science*. 2024 Feb 23;383(6685):eadi3808.

<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.adi3808>

Conference Highlights

Dr. Karyn Goodman Leads ASCO Plenary Session on the ESOPEC Trial

The randomized phase 3 ESOPEC trial compared perioperative chemotherapy (FLOT) to neoadjuvant chemoradiotherapy (CROSS) in patients with resectable, locally advanced esophageal and gastroesophageal junction adenocarcinoma. The study, conducted in Germany, demonstrated that perioperative FLOT improved median overall survival by 29 months when compared with neoadjuvant CROSS. Jens Hoepfner, MD, of the University Medical Center OWL in Detmold, Germany, presented the ESOPEC results at a plenary session during the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO).



Karyn Goodman, MD, MS, Vice Chair for Research and Quality in the Department of Radiation Oncology, served as discussant, providing her perspective on the ESOPEC findings. “FLOT will likely be adopted as a more standard approach in the United States for esophageal and GEJ adenocarcinomas, although the option of CROSS, then surgery, then adjuvant nivolumab is still a viable option for patients and is quite well-tolerated,” said Dr. Goodman in an interview with *ASCO Daily News* during the annual meeting.

<https://dailynews.ascopubs.org/do/perioperative-chemotherapy-outperforms-neoadjuvant-chemoradiotherapy-curative-treatment>

(continued)

Conference Highlights (continued)

A Strong Showing for Our Medical Physicists



Charlotte Read, MS



Changseon Kim, PhD

With 24 accepted abstracts, our medical physicists team was well-represented at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) held in July. Among their presentations were two award-winning posters by **Charlotte Read, MS**, Clinical Medical Physics Resident, and **Changseon Kim, PhD**, QA Chief Physicist, Radiation Oncology. Each received the AAPM's Best of Professional Poster Award.

Ms. Read's poster, "Navigating the Rise of AI: Time-Series Analysis of AI-Assisted Scientific Writing," delves into the

emerging trend of AI-assisted scientific writing with a goal to provide essential insights in anticipation of its increasing prevalence.

Dr. Kim's poster, "Validating Linac Equivalency to Ensure Consistent Patient Treatment Using Contingent Machines Within a Health System," features his work in establishing protocols for ensuring continuous patient treatment in the event of a linac malfunction, facilitating a smooth transition to an alternate unit.

Support Our Enrollment Target for Brain Mets Trial

The Department of Radiation Oncology is seeking to meet its annual enrollment goal for the NRG-BN012 study – a major phase 3 randomized clinical trial for patients with brain metastases planning to undergo surgery. With this study, researchers are investigating whether stereotactic radiosurgery is more effective preoperatively rather than postoperatively for resectable brain metastases and can delay a relapse or progression of disease.

Eligibility criteria includes:

- Up to 4 brain metastases (1-4 lesions on MRI)
- At least one lesion requiring resection (2.0 cm to 5.0 cm)
- Non-resected lesions \leq 4.0 cm

For more information or to refer a patient, contact:

Stanislav Lazarev, MD, Radiation Oncology, and
Principal Investigator for the site

Lynda Rath, MD, Associate Director of Research,
Radiation Oncology

212.824.7309 | CCTO@mssm.edu

Your assistance in enrolling patients is invaluable and greatly appreciated. The outcomes of this study could significantly impact clinical practice.

New and Noteworthy

Latest Radiation Oncology Technology Comes to Mount Sinai Union Square

We are pleased to announce that our new TrueBeam linear accelerator and new CT simulator are now live in our Mount Sinai Union Square Radiation Oncology Department. The state-of-the-art linac, with its advanced imaging techniques

and AlignRT, ensures a more precise and effective treatment for our patients. The addition of these two technologies is helping to provide the best possible outcomes for our patients.

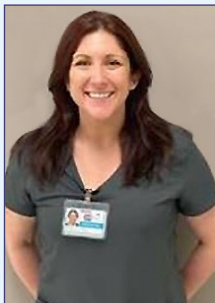


Radiation oncology team with their new CT simulator

Dr. Kenneth Rosenzweig and department members celebrate the installation of the new TrueBeam linear accelerator.



A Radiation Therapist with an Artist's Eye

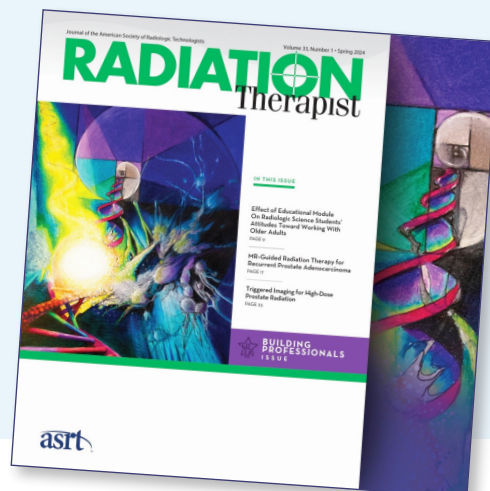


Long before **Shannon Corrigan, RT(T)**, became a radiation therapist, she had a gift for art that continued throughout her childhood and into college, where she earned a Bachelor in Fine Arts at SUNY New Paltz. Six years ago, she decided to pursue radiation therapy as a career. "In January 2018, my

grandma was hospitalized with metastatic breast cancer. I got the idea of becoming a radiation therapist while I was taking her to one of her appointments," said Ms. Corrigan in a recent interview with *Gallery&Studio*, a magazine devoted to supporting lesser-known artists.

According to Ms. Corrigan, her interest in medical illustrations resurfaced in her artwork, along with the physics and math she uses as a radiation therapist. The merging of the two resulted in her creation of

Double Strand Break, a mixed media drawing of a photon delivering a lethal strike to a DNA strand, which she submitted to the Cover Art Contest of the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT). As one of the winning artists, her painting was featured on the cover of the Spring 2024 issue of *Radiation Therapist*. Ms. Corrigan will also be featured in an edition of *ASRT Scanner* highlighting her work as a radiation therapist and artist.



Mount Sinai Radiation Oncology Social Media

Interested in joining the social media committee?

Have a photo you would like to post?

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